

Eastern Region Summit

L'Enfant Plaza Hotel
Washington, DC

April 5th, 2012



**U.S Department of Veterans Affairs
Office of Public and Intergovernmental Affairs
Office of Tribal Government Relations
810 Vermont Ave NW, Suite 915
Washington, DC 20420**

Conference Objectives:

The goal of this meeting to invite tribal leadership and tribal Veterans from within the Eastern Region (Maine, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, North Carolina, South Carolina, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas), as well as, the VA administrations to collaborate, educate, network, and build relationships to better serve Veterans and their families. This meeting will also serve as an education session on VA benefits and services.

Mission of the Office of Tribal Government Relations:

The VA consults with American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments to develop partnerships that enhance access to services and benefits by Veterans and their families.

Vision of the Office of Tribal Government Relations:

The VA has positive relationships with American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments and is part of the landscape of Indian Country. Every Veteran receives excellent services that are holistic in nature and that lead to optimal health. American Indian and Alaska Native tribal governments view the VA as an organization of integrity that advocates for their needs. The VA demonstrates its commitment to Veterans by being culturally competent, respecting the unique sovereign status of Tribes, and reaching Veterans in Indian Country. Veterans know how to access all VA services and benefits and are woven into the fabric of the VA.

Objectives of the Office of Tribal Government Relations:

1. Increase Veterans access to healthcare and benefits;
2. Economic Sustainability:
 - a. Increase utilization of Native American Direct Home Loan Program
 - b. Increase utilization of Post 9/11 GI Bill
 - c. Increase utilization of Vocational Rehabilitation Program
 - d. Increase access to Compensation and Pension
 - e. Increase access to federal employment opportunities
 - f. Facilitate greater involvement by tribes and Native American Veterans in small business development and federal contracting opportunities
3. Tribal Consultation



TUESDAY, April 3, 2012

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| 8:30 am – 9:00 am | <p style="text-align: center;">Opening Ceremony Keynote Address: Mr. John Garcia Deputy Assistant Secretary Intergovernmental Affairs Welcome/Blessing:</p> |
| 9:00 am – 9:30 am | <p style="text-align: center;">Overview of OTGR / Goals for Meeting: Stephanie Birdwell, Director, Office of Tribal Government Relations Erika Moott, Tribal Government Relations Specialist- Eastern Region</p> |
| 9:30 am – 10:00 am | <p style="text-align: center;">Center for Minority Veterans/ Minority Veterans Program Coordinators Renaee Allen Juanita Mullen</p> |
| 10:00 am – 10:15 am | BREAK |
| 10:15am – 11:15 am | <p style="text-align: center;">Tribal Veterans Representative Training W.J “Buck” Richardson Minority Veterans Program Coordinator, VISN 19</p> |
| 11:15am – 12:00 noon | <p style="text-align: center;">Indian Health Service Speakers: Dr. Susan Karol, Chief Medical Officer, Indian Health Service Dr. Harry Brown, Chief Medical Officer, Nashville Area Office</p> |
| 12:00noon- 1:00pm | LUNCH |
| 1:00pm –2:00pm | <p style="text-align: center;">VA Cemetery Grants Requesting Headstone/ Presidential Memorial Certificate Howard Orr, Program Manager, National Cemetery Administration</p> |
| 2:00pm-3:00pm | <p style="text-align: center;">Education Services: Post 9/11 GI Bill Ann Richardson, Program Analyst</p> |
| 3:00pm-3:15pm | BREAK |
| 3:15pm-4:00pm | <p style="text-align: center;">Native American Direct Loan Program, Special Adaptive Housing, VA Home Loan Program Erica Lewis, Veterans Benefits Administration, Loan Guaranty Service</p> |
| 4:00pm-4:30pm | <p style="text-align: center;">Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Services Sabrina McNeil, Program Analyst</p> |



WEDNESDAY, April 4, 2012

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| 8:30 am – 8:45 am | Overview of workshops and speakers |
| 8:45 am – 9:45 am | VHA 101: Overview of VHA Healthcare System Eligibility and Enrollment Kristen Cunningham, Business Policy Office |
| 9:45 am - 10:00 am | BREAK |
| 10:00 am –11:00 am | The Cherokee Project: Developing a Partnership for Life Asheville VAMC Dr. Barbara St. Hilaire, Asheville VAMC Penny James, Asheville VAMC William “Skip” Myers, Asheville VAMC |
| 11:00 am –1 2:00 noon | Jackson VAMC/ VISN 16: Collaborations with the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians Lynn Langley, Jackson VAMC Donna Alford, Jackson VAMC Amanda Ellis, Jackson VAMC Kelly Duke, VISN 16 |
| 12:00 noon – 1:00 pm | LUNCH |
| 1:00 p m - 2:00 p m | Veterans Panel: T. Jay Hunting Horse, Lieutenant Colonel, US Marine Corps Returning Service Members (OEF/OIF) Substance Abuse Programs/ Suicide Prevention Jan Kemp, National Mental Health Program Director Suicide Prevention |
| 2:00 p m - 2:15 p m | BREAK |
| 2:15 pm -3:00 pm | VA/IHS Memorandum of Understanding Dr. Mary Beth Skupien, Director VA Office of Rural Health |
| 3:00 p m - 4:00 p m | Veterans Service Organizations (VSO) Kevin Secor, VSO Liaison |
| 4:00 p m - 4:30 p m | Closing Ceremony Presentations |